

## **Minutes of SHUG executive committee meeting of November 10, 2003.**

The Executive Committee convened by conference call at 1:30 PM EDT on November 10, 2003. 10 of the 11 members were present. The members in attendance were:

Paul Butler (Secretary)  
Zema Chowdhuri  
Takeshi Egami (Immediate past chair)  
Christina Hoffmann  
Joanna Krueger (Chair)  
Nancy Ross  
Paul Sokol (Vice chair)  
John Tranquada (Past chair)  
David Vaknin  
Angus Wilkinson

The meeting began with the approval of the September minutes as well as the notes from the on-site meeting. Paul Butler noted that on the web we have minutes for early 2000 followed by the 2003 minutes given the impression of a large hiatus in the group's activities. Paul B. indicated that he had some more publishable minutes, though by no means all, from intervening meetings and suggested posting them. The committee agreed.

Next Joanna reported on the HFIR review meeting. One of the primary outcomes for SHUG was the idea that the user committee should take a more active role in guiding the direction of the facilities. A discussion ensued with some mention of the differences between the X-ray and neutron communities as well as some specific proposals for more input such as having SHUG Executive Committee members actively participating in various decision making committees as well as advisory committees. For example Paul Sokol pointed out that issues related to computer access and radiation training, which are directly relevant to the users, are being discussed now but the SHUG is not a part of the process. It would be much better to have input in the formulation stage of the policy rather than only being presented with final results and being asked for possible minor revisions.

Joanna reported that the fast access proposal had been submitted and that the response so far was that it was being looked at. Joanna suggested that we should invite Greg Smith to the next meeting to discuss this issue as HFIR will be the first to do any implementation.

John Tranquada briefed the group on the Brookhaven meeting on users access to facility issues. It was apparently a day and a half event. The highlight was the address by Bill Nay, from the Office of Science discussing security. The DOE has been operating under a 1992 DOE security order. A draft of a new order has been circulated for comment and a number of suggested revisions sent back. The final revision may be out sometime soon

and the labs will then have only 5 days to respond. John indicated that the revisions proposed by Bill Nay are relatively reasonable, particularly given the first draft. A letter from the user groups to the Secretary of Energy in support of Bill Nay's efforts was being drafted and Joanna as chair should be receiving a copy soon. The other issue which is much more difficult is the foreign national situation as it involves many more departments than just DOE. While the State Department has said that they will begin a priority screening of visa applications for scientists going to National Laboratories, the bottom line for the foreseeable future seems to be that there will be long lead times for foreigners and that they need to make very sure they get their I94 forms stamped with at least a B1 visa. It was suggested that at least the facilities should place as much information of this nature as possible in obvious places on their web sites. In particular HFIR's website should post this.

Paul Sokol announced that he had now contacted all the facilities (he is on the NIST user group and talked to Ray Teller at IPNS and Allen Hurd at LANSCE) and everyone is on board. The way he would proceed is to form a small committee with reps from each facility to work out the details of how to organize this reception in order to be able to extract the necessary input. Paul Butler asked if he had contacted the actual user group of LANSCE (the LUG) whose chair is currently Bill Hamilton. Paul S. indicated he had not but would do so soon. Paul S. suggested he would be willing to represent SHUG on this committee and asked for input. The suggestion was made that David Vaknin represent the HFIR side of the SHUG.

Moving to the elections, Paul Butler led the discussion on finalizing the slate of candidates. The first item of business was to agree on appropriate numbers of candidates. It was agreed that for the single postdoc/graduate student position two to three candidates would be appropriate and given the number of interested parties we should go with three (seven suggestions were received). For the five 2 year positions 10-15 was thought reasonable. Paul Butler agreed to create a new table with the final slate and circulate for final approval. Joanna asked that the potential candidates be contacted to ensure their willingness to run before distributing the final table.

As for the candidates themselves, Kim Tait of the University of Arizona, Tadanori Koga of Stony Brook, and Andy Christianson of Irvine were selected from the suggestions for postdoc/graduate student candidates as giving the best breadth in representation. In order to simplify the process, two suggested nominations from ORNL whose position (postdoc or staff) was still uncertain were removed. They did not appear to represent any major new area, and some concern was expressed about the number of people from government labs. Paul Butler then suggested adding 4 names (all from universities) to round out the representation. In particular since polymer people form a large fraction of the user base and complained last time about lack of representation in the candidates, two polymer or polymer/complex fluids people were suggested. These were agreed to for a total of 10 regular candidates.

Joanna asked about the possibility of people standing for re-election and Paul Butler indicated that the bylaws do not prohibit such and that in fact the first time out, in 2002,

all the members leaving stood for re-election. That year they ran unopposed and were all “re-elected.” It was deemed a reasonable means of ensuring continuity so early in the life of the organization. The following year nobody stood for re-election. Several members then nominated Paul Butler and Angus Wilkinson to stand for re-election. Paul Butler said he wanted to think about it a bit as he understood the need for continuity but expressed concern over the precedent of quasi-permanent memberships. This would also raise the number of candidates to 12. A brief discussion ensued on the need for better continuity in the long term, how best to achieve it and whether amendments to the bylaws, such as increasing the normal term to 3 years might be appropriate.

Next, the SNS summer shutdown proposal was discussed, Al Ekkebus at SNS having sent an email to the members of the executive committee requesting input. At issue is the SNS power contract which is currently being negotiated. Agreeing not to run the accelerator during peak season, such as August, can lead to substantial savings. Closing down a \$1.4 billion dollar facility during summer (a prime time for academic people to go do experiments) seems ludicrous on the face of it. However Al points out that the operating schedule for SNS calls for two 4 week outages every year (along with some other shorter outages). Placing one of those four week outages during the peak month would save money. Furthermore, most Universities start up in August so that it may not be that much of an imposition. Some faculty members on the committee also indicated that in many cases they would send grad students or postdocs so that the summer “prime” time is not necessarily that big an issue anyway. After some discussion, the committee agreed that the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of August would not be a particularly bad time any more than any other 4 week outage. Including all of August might be a slight imposition but probably not so bad as to negate the savings. However, if the beginning of the shutdown were to move into the end of July, it was felt that the impact would no longer be negligible and the committee would like to be consulted again if that becomes a possibility.

A discussion then ensued as to the proper way for SNS or HFIR to solicit input from the executive committee. Paul Butler noted that this was the second time the input was solicited on an individual basis, the need for a speedy response being the primary driver. He also noted that this presumably was exactly what Dave Moncton was looking for when requesting two separate executive committees (one for HFIR and one for SNS) so that he would know whom to call when he needed rapid feedback on SNS specific issues. The SHUG response was to form two standing special committees. After a brief discussion it was agreed that given that a healthy discussion often will alter the response, it seems appropriate that input, even with a rapid turnaround should be addressed either to the chair or to the chair of the appropriate special committee. The chair contacted should be the one to make the decision as to whether a simple email vote, an email discussion, or a special session of the committee is the appropriate way to provide the necessary response. Joanna said she would make that request in responding to the summer shutdown proposal

Given the time the other two items on the agenda were postponed and the meeting adjourned at 2:30PM EDT

Respectfully submitted,  
Paul Butler  
SHUG Secretary